

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**COMMAND AND CONTROL OF HOMELAND SECURITY RESPONSE TO
CATASTROPHIC INCIDENTS**

by

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ABSTRACT

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The terrorist attacks of 9-11 and Hurricane Katrina have resulted in millions of dollars in damages, thousands of lives lost, and thousands more left suffering. The government's collective efforts left much to be desired in many areas, especially in the first few days and weeks following the event. Much of the failure in the response effort is due to the confusion between the various levels of government agencies as to who had authority to make critical decisions and confusion over who was in charge over the response efforts. This paper presents three courses of action to answer the question of command and control of catastrophic incidents. The first COA is to retain the status quo of the states in the lead role with federal agencies such as the DHS and the DOD providing support when, and where, requested. The second course of action is one in which DHS has the lead from the beginning with states providing the usual first responder support but subordinate to the direction of DHS/FEMA directives. Finally, the third scenario is one in which the DOD assumes the lead role for disaster response.

COMMAND AND CONTROL OF HOMELAND SECURITY RESPONSE TO CATASTROPHIC INCIDENTS

Events like the terrorist attacks of 9-11 and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have resulted in millions of dollars in damage, thousands of lives lost, and thousands more left suffering. What is apparent in looking at the recovery efforts of these catastrophes is that our government's collective efforts left much to be desired in many areas, especially in the first few days and weeks following the event. Much of the failure in the response effort is due to the confusion between the various levels of government agencies as to who had authority to make critical decisions, such as declaring an emergency and asking for federal assistance, and ultimately, confusion over who was in charge over the response efforts. Looking specifically at the State of Louisiana's reaction to Katrina, there was a significant period of time when it was not clear whether the State, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), or the United States military was in charge.

This confusion is in stark contrast to the clarity expressed by New York City Office of Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph F. Bruno in stating that during the aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Center the City of New York was firmly in charge of the response operation.¹ In comparison, at one time or another, the New Orleans mayor, the State governor, and FEMA officials all claimed to be in charge of the situation in New Orleans. Meanwhile, valuable time lost in rendering aid to residents resulted in deaths and unnecessary suffering. This situation became so chaotic that the Director of FEMA, Mike Brown, resigned and the President directed the U.S. Armed Forces to take over response efforts with LTG Honore in charge under the direction of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). In the final analysis, the lack of any clear command structure compounded by the absence of a comprehensive and coordinated response plan in the critical days leading up to and immediately following the flooding was a national embarrassment and, though there was plenty of blame to go around, the President accepted responsibility for the poor showing and vowed to fix it.

The National Strategy for Homeland Security (NSHS), supported by the National Response Plan (NRP) and the Catastrophic Incident Supplement (CIS), provide the direction and detail to avoid the costly confusion that happened in response to incidents like Katrina. The three strategic objectives of this strategy are 1) "prevent terrorist attacks within the United States; 2) reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism, and 3) minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur."² The strategy identifies a critical mission area of Emergency Preparedness and Response that specifically focuses on the strategic objective of 'minimize

damage and recovery'. The NRP is a detailed document that discusses likely terrorist attacks and natural disasters and ways in which the nation would respond. One of these scenarios is a major hurricane.³ The CIS is a detailed operations plan (OPLAN) and execution matrix that describes in detail the actions to be taken, by function and agency, by the hour as the catastrophic incident (CI) occurs.⁴ However, in all of this detail, none of these documents answer the question of who is in charge of the response efforts for a CI. All agree that response and initial responsibility is always at the lowest level but nothing addresses the command relationship once federal agencies become involved to take on a large part of the response effort. Current Homeland Security policy states that in the event of a national disaster, or 'incident of national significance', the federal Department of Homeland Security, under the direction of the President, is responsible for providing a unified command structure with a single federal coordinator managing the response effort at the site.⁵ However, when considering state sovereignty this national policy becomes problematic, confusing, and contentious. In view of the chaos that followed Katrina and lack of any immediate unity of command, it is time for a policy assessment of who should be in charge of response efforts following CIs.

This paper presents three courses of action (COAs) in an attempt to answer the question of command and control of catastrophic incidents. The first COA is to retain the status quo of the states in the lead role with federal agencies such as the DHS and the DOD providing support when, and where, requested. Currently, the DHS has the federal lead in providing *support* to the states. However, circumstances may arise where local and state agencies become overwhelmed and the President may direct the DHS or the DOD to assume the lead. The second course of action is one in which DHS has the lead from the beginning with states providing the usual first responder support but subordinate to the direction of DHS/FEMA directives. This takes away much of the states powers and gives more authority to federal agencies, especially the DHS and its subordinate FEMA. The third scenario is one in which the DOD assumes the lead role for disaster response. This is similar to COA 2 except the lead is the DOD not the DHS.

A discussion of each course of action will consider the strengths and weaknesses of each and consider which best meets the standards of feasibility, acceptability, and suitability. Feasibility is defined as a COA that accomplishes the mission within constraints such as available resources and time available. An acceptable COA is one which is proportional in the sense that costs are worth the advantages gained. Suitable COAs accomplish the mission and are in compliance with the guidance or intent.⁶ After exploration of the three COAs, a recommendation and a way ahead for this current problem will be presented.

COA 1: Status Quo with states in lead supported by DHS.

This first course of action to consider is the existing arrangement in 2005 in which each of the fifty states assumes complete responsibility for CI response. This may be called the New York approach. As mentioned earlier, Commissioner Bruno asserted that response efforts to CIs in New York are under their command and control and they would ask for help from federal agencies if needed, but would still be in charge. To avert CIs New York takes a proactive posture compared to other state efforts by conducting active intelligence collection and analysis around the world as evident in Bruno's comments regarding their intelligence agents at the scene of the Madrid and London bombings.⁷ The national strategy calls for the federal government to provide support to states when needed. However, it may be wishful thinking on Bruno's part to think that federal agencies will relinquish complete control to local authorities.

Perhaps the most valid argument to leaving the states in charge is that by establishing a state-wide network of first responders, supported by a specialized trained, manned, and equipped NG unit, the governor would have a dedicated and focused capability under his control to provide rapid and effective response to incidents. This would provide a fast-acting and agile capability unencumbered by the bureaucracy that existed in Louisiana as deliberations between local, state, and federal agencies were disjointed, unreliable, and costly. To illustrate, Texas Congressman Rick Perry underscores the concerns with placing control in federal hands.

If the federal response to Hurricane Katrina was, as President Bush agreed, inadequate, then how am I supposed to explain to the people of Port Arthur, Galveston . . . and Houston that it is a good thing that Washington will take over next time? And if the federal response to Katrina – a national disaster that we knew was coming for several days – was too slow, how on earth can the federal government provide an effective and immediate response before a radiological bomb goes off in Dallas or a biological agent is let loose across the border from El Paso in Juarez?⁸

A networked and postured team of first responders gives the governors that immediate capability that Perry argues would be missing with federal control. Also, local and state responders live and work and respond routinely to incidents in the communities in which they are charged to protect. They have long-established relationships with the communities. This familiarity results in an awareness, expertise, and unique capability that enhances rapid and effective response that would be difficult to replicate on a federal level. MG Rowe, Director of Operations of U.S. Northern Command, acknowledges this relationship and supports the idea of states retaining command and control.⁹ Command and control of these capabilities at the state level eliminates bureaucratic layering and disjointed communications systems that would occur if federal agencies were in charge. Also, states have already begun to establish mutual aid

agreements in which they agree to provide assistance to neighboring states when needed. This important arrangement provides increased regional capability for response without diminishing the power of the individual states. Continuation of this arrangement should be mandatory and tied to federal funding initiatives.

In order to fully leverage their organic capabilities, some states have begun to restructure their National Guard (NG) forces with the intent of focusing a portion of their force on disaster response. They have been used extensively for domestic missions (airport security, Olympics support, and firefighting) as well as serving the nation abroad in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). In this COA, portions of each state NG force can be restructured to provide rapid response capability for homeland security missions within their state. Critical capabilities required of each unit would include multi-functional brigades that feature rapid reaction forces to provide immediate assistance to first responders. Critical skill sets include security, logistics, medical, communications, and CBRNE/WMD teams. Training and integration of these forces with local and state agencies and community first responders, enabled by regional, multi-state aid agreements provides a local and layered response force for the governor to rely on and provides unity of command. The special skills acquired by the formation of these NG units provides a unique set of capabilities available not only to the state but to surrounding states in a mutual aid agreement, and if required, to the federal government for disaster relief in other parts of the world.¹⁰

However, unity of command at the local and state level is only effective as long as it well rehearsed and synchronized with all levels of response and doesn't get overwhelmed as in the case of Louisiana. Katrina showed that unity of effort and command and control were both lost probably in the hours before Katrina hit landfall. Once the state and local agencies are overwhelmed where do they turn? Regional aid agreements are not intended to replace command and control. They are meant to provide support to the state in trouble. The federal level of response must take over at this point. States do not have the resources on hand to act wholly without federal assistance. Federal assistance is critical in terms of funding, equipping, and training of local teams to provide services necessary for immediate and effective response. Federal oversight can set and enforce national standards for first responders and state capabilities and enforce compliance by tying it to funding.

Finally, it is questionable whether the federal government can afford to lose the capability that the NG provides by fencing off a portion of the force for state and regional missions only. Without their contributions in the GWOT it would place an even greater burden on already overtaxed reserve and active component force. More research must be done in this area to see

how this affects our national military strategy. One way to offset the isolation of NG troops for a specific role in CI response would be to build their skill sets in this area. This would be fairly easy for many of the forces as they could draw from the communities in which they reside and spend most of their time in. To ensure these skills are retained a mandatory bi-annual certification of critical CI skills might help in bridging the gap between current and future roles of the NG.

If the nation must maintain the status quo with the DHS as the federal agency in support of state lead efforts and avoid the mistakes that occurred in response to Katrina some modifications must take place. Approval of DHS Secretary Chertoff's Six Point Plan will strengthen FEMA and the DHS. It is aimed at increasing overall preparedness and making improvements in the areas of transportation security systems, border security, information sharing, DHS internal procedures, and realignment of DHS.¹¹ Additionally, states must agree to federal standards of performance by their local and state responders and this must be tied to funding; states must agree to perform multi-level (local, state, regional, national) exercises/evaluations of procedures to assess and improve in readiness, communications, and ability to provide assistance; and, assess the reorganization of the National Guard and its impact on the national military strategy, operations tempo (OPTEMPO), and readiness in regards to the GWOT from a national perspective. This COA maintains the status quo with the modifications discussed above to DHS structure. It directly addresses our current problem of leadership in national emergencies. With DHS reorganization in accordance with Secretary Chertoff's plan, the Department will be better postured to assume the lead should states become overwhelmed.

COA 2: Department of Homeland Security Lead.

The NSHS clearly states that the DHS is the lead for primary command and control to ensure response is immediate and effective by "providing a coordinated, comprehensive federal response . . . and mounting a swift and effective recovery effort."¹² Under the critical mission of Emergency Preparedness and Response, there are several key initiatives that focus primarily on response efforts. These include: initiatives to integrate the multiple federal response plans into a single, all discipline incident management plan and creation of a National Incident Management System (NIMS); significant improvement in a seamless communications system among all levels of responders; significant improvements in preparing the nation's health care providers for catastrophic events through training and equipping and by the DHS taking responsibility of the National Disaster Medical System which provides rapid response and surge

capabilities to support CIs; establishment of a new unified combatant command, USNORTHCOM, to be responsible for homeland defense and assisting the DHS where appropriate in CIs; and increased federal spending under the First Responder Initiative to improve first responder capability to prepare for and respond to CIs. This initiative not only increases funding dramatically but also consolidates numerous federal programs into one unified command.¹³

All of these initiatives have been accomplished to varying levels of completion. The NRP and CIS provide the framework in which the NIMS is utilized to orchestrate the efforts of all levels of response. The Emergency Support Functions in the NRP and the detailed by-hour, by-agency execution matrix in the CIS provide the necessary information on how to respond to CIs. Investment and assistance in improving communications systems has occurred. It is notable to point out that this action was complete in September of 2005, just after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast. NORTHCOM, operational since 2002, continues to evolve however and their focus and support in this area continues to improve.

There were many successes in spite of all that went wrong in the Katrina response. Hundreds of thousands of residents were evacuated before the storm hit land; thousands more were rescued during and after the storm under extremely difficult conditions including over 33,000 by the DHS's Coast Guard alone.¹⁴ DHS coordination with DOD resulted in the armed forces providing food, water, medical aid, and assistance in restoring order. All of this was accomplished on a magnitude of catastrophe never before experienced by our nation and was indicative of our government's ability to respond and the heroic efforts of individuals and agencies at all levels. Based on this success and the organizational framework noted below the DHS is well-postured to be the lead agency in response to CIs across the nation.

Katrina struck land just as DHS Secretary Chertoff was completing a departmental review that called for several changes in organization and procedure. The majority of critics citing the slow, disorganized response of the DHS agree that these changes are critical and will lead to improved performance in the Department. In the area of response, Chertoff proposes a major reorganization of the Department flattening the current stove-piped organization and notably aligning FEMA as a distinct agency within the Department with direct lines of communication to the Director. This move should strengthen FEMA and allow it to focus on its traditional mission of disaster preparedness and response. Chertoff also has established a 24/7/365 Homeland Security Operations Center (HSOC) with the purpose of serving as the center for information sharing and domestic incident management for all levels of response. Finally, the reorganization includes a new Directorate of Preparedness that will increase efficiencies by

consolidating preparedness assets and including offices of state and local coordination.¹⁵ This reorganization thus enables the DHS to provide greater leadership and expertise in the event of a CI. The DHS and other federal agencies involved in disaster response provide a level of capability and expertise unmatched at the state level.

For all that the DHS did well there are many criticisms that the organizational changes weren't done fast enough, the reorganization wasn't effectively organized, and it didn't accomplish enough. An independent review by The Heritage Foundation and The Center for Strategic and International Studies declared the structure of DHS as "unsuitable" for leading the nation in responding to CIs. This criticism is pointed at the layers of bureaucracy that response agencies, including FEMA, had to wade through to get assistance and decisions. Similarly, the DHS had not met the requirement imposed in 2002 of implementing a plan to establish regional response offices consolidated under DHS. If this were done, critics argue that communications and coordination in the response would have been much improved.¹⁶

Also, many critics of a DHS lead role say that it does not have the resources or organization to implement a response that is required to be rapid, innovative, and decisive. Its organization is too layered for these qualities to emerge. The White House Homeland Security Advisor Francis Fragos Townsend acknowledged the DHS had failed to anticipate the effects of a CI. According to Townsend, a breakdown in communications within federal agencies and between federal, state, and local responders was the single underlying cause to the poor response.¹⁷

Another criticism of the DHS was that it did not utilize the CIS which was written for exactly the kind of disaster Katrina was. Among other things, this supplement gives the federal government special authority to bypass state governments in cases of CIs. DHS Secretary Chertoff declared Katrina to be an "incident of national significance" on 30 August but never activated the CIS. The allegation is that the DHS was still in negotiations with state officials on what kind of role the federal agencies would play in recovery.¹⁸ Finally, besides a breakdown in communications and a general failure in leadership by DHS and FEMA, there appeared to be a pervading perception of foot dragging and a lack of situational awareness in the federal response. The Emergency and Disaster Management Report found that "three days after impact the federal government still did not seem to have even a general idea about the situation particularly in the city of New Orleans."¹⁹

Consolidation of command and control in the DHS for national disasters will result in a synergy of core competencies and improve the ability of the DHS to lead national efforts in CI management. It would result in less bureaucracy, a more effective FEMA, and over time,

better integration of all levels of response. Leadership on a federal level is spatially distanced from the problem and potentially results in a lesser situational awareness.

COA 3: Department of Defense Lead.

In the aftermath of Katrina, President Bush asked Congress to consider a greater role for the military in response to disasters. "Clearly, in the case of a terrorist attack that would be the case, but is there a natural disaster . . . that would enable the DOD to become the lead agency in coordinating and leading the response effort?"²⁰ His remarks have led to much debate and analysis on a course of action in which the DOD would have lead responsibility in CI response. In this scenario, DOD would use NORTHCOM as its lead agency in executing homeland security policy.

The DOD has established the office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and DOD's strategy for Homeland Defense and Civilian Support is well-nested within the NSHS and the NRP. Procedures and organizational structures are in place. Military involvement in Katrina response and in the response to the 9-11 attacks demonstrates the unique capabilities that our military can provide: unity of command, reliable security, logistics, robust communications networks, and medical support are just a few of these examples. In a CI response military forces would establish operations centers with a reporting responsibility to NORTHCOM. This provides a direct reporting chain through military channels unencumbered by the bureaucracy of other federal agencies. Additionally, the military has the communications systems and expertise to provide uninterrupted communications between the local and state representatives to NORTHCOM's HSOC. Similar operations centers would be established and manned at the local and state levels. Manning would consist of a coalition of local/state first responders, FEMA, and NG/NORTHCOM representatives. Finally, U.S. Forces Command (FORSCOM) units, under command and control of NORTHCOM when activated for Homeland Security, would be tasked to provide rapid reaction multi-functional capabilities.

The main opposition to this COA, like COA 2, is that it is a threat to state's rights. Under current law state governors have command and control of response to disasters. Governors have the power to deploy their National Guard and it is assumed that should federal assistance be provided it would be in a supporting role.²¹ From the view of local and state representatives, the military is meant to prepare for and win the nation's wars, not to serve as a first responder to state emergencies. There is also valid concern over whether the military can take on this additional mission when it is already strained in all components in fighting the GWOT resulting in multiple deployments and recruiting and retention shortfalls. The DOD is also sensitive to the

idea of using federal troops in a domestic police role.²² Opponents also argue whether the nation can afford to reserve special units in anticipation of a disaster to occur. The first responders are already in place and train for and react to disasters routinely. Finally, proponents of COA 2 (DHS lead) claim that this action is unnecessary as there already is a good working relationship between DOD and DHS that facilitates planning and rapid response through the placement of DOD liaisons in key DHS offices to include the HSOC.²³

Discussion and Recommendation: Recommend COA 1- Retain Status Quo with states in lead supported by DHS with additional changes to existing procedures.

COA 1 provides a feasible and suitable solution to our current problem of leadership in national emergencies. States can't go it alone and need resource assistance from the federal government. The DHS must reorganize in accordance with Secretary Chertoff's plan to be better postured to assume the lead should states become overwhelmed. Following these modifications this is an acceptable COA with minimum cost.

COA 2 calls for consolidation of command and control in the DHS for national disasters. It is a suitable plan that improves the ability of the DHS to lead national efforts in CI management. It is an acceptable approach and should result in less bureaucracy, a more effective FEMA, and over time, better integration of all levels of response. However, this COA is not feasible in that it would face stiff resistance from states and Congress based on concerns that it violates state's rights in many areas and would be difficult in implementation.

COA 3 assigns the lead role to the Department of Defense. This is certainly suitable in that it does accomplish the intent of more focused command and control of CI response. However, it is doubtful that it is worth the military costs incurred to add this mission to an already over-stretched DOD given OPTEMPO and competing requirements already on the force structure. Also like COA 2, COA 3 violates states rights and brings into question the proper roles of our federal forces. This COA is therefore not feasible or acceptable.

Although all three COAs are suitable in meeting the three stated objectives of the NSHS, the most feasible and acceptable COA is COA 1 given the re-organization of DHS as proposed by Secretary Chertoff, it strengthens the ability of FEMA to provide assistance to states, it preserves state sovereignty, and it has widespread acceptance as the best solution to lead the nation's response to catastrophic incidents. In addition, with reorganization well underway the answer to the question of command, control, and coordination of catastrophic incident response becomes clearer. Based on the framework with states in the lead of internal incidents, they could then ask for help from higher echelons when their capabilities are overcome. The Department of Homeland Security should lead the effort with support from NORTHCOM to

establish an echeloned system of support centers prepared to provide response that is intended to give the 'right' amount of support and expertise to states. Beyond state level this framework would have regional operations centers consisting of appropriate agency representation to include DHS, FEMA, state and regional representation, and DOD. Through mutual aid agreements and with incentives tied to funding this regional construct would serve to develop contingency plans to respond to incidents; they would coordinate, develop, and lead regional exercises to rehearse these plans, and, in the case of a catastrophic incident they would execute these multi-state support plans. Federal liaisons from perhaps DHS and DOD/NORTHCOM and the Homeland Security Operations Center would be on 'stand-by' monitoring the situation and prepared to provide federal support as necessary. This framework of echeloned operations centers and multi-functional representation at each level is a step in the right direction of clarity in the lead roles and responsibilities in the command and control of incident response.

Even with the recommended COA there are still other critical areas in which Congress and the DHS work to improve effectiveness of catastrophic incident response. Immediate action is imperative in the resource (money) allocation of Homeland Security funds across the country. In a recent report assessing the progress of the federal government in homeland security measures taken since 9-11, former members of the 9-11 Commission gave the federal government low marks in most areas rated. The commission, now known as the 9-11 Public Discourse Project, graded the area of homeland security financing an 'F'. According to a recent New York Times editorial, the DHS has in the past fiscal year awarded funds to areas based more on 'pork' than on risk. Assuming that most agree that New York remains a priority target for Al Qaeda, it is hard to understand why the DHS "gave the port of New York and New Jersey just \$16.6 million in port security grants, almost exactly what it gave to Memphis. Houston got \$35.3 million."²⁴ Examples of how some states have squandered federal dollars earmarked for HS include a Newark, N.J. purchase of air-conditioned garbage trucks, the District of Columbia purchase of leather jackets, and the Columbus, Ohio Fire Department purchase of body armor for their dogs.²⁵ Clearly these are not the priority areas we ought to be focusing our efforts and resources on in the name of Homeland Security.

Rather than tying HS funding to other bills and ending up with results such as discussed above the funding should be tied to a risk-based formula with the federal dollars prioritized to those areas most likely to be targeted by terrorists. The 9-11 Commission findings report that "Congress has still not changed the underlying statutory authority for homeland security grants . . . to ensure that funds are used wisely. As a result, homeland security funds continue to be

distributed without regard for risk, vulnerability, or the consequences of an attack.”²⁶ Effective immediately the government should allocate homeland security monies based on nationwide vulnerability assessments. Although all states are arguably in need, the majority of funding should be awarded to those areas that pose the greatest risk to terrorist attacks (like the port of New York and New Jersey), are the most vulnerable, and afford the enemy the highest payoff. This procedure must also integrate assessments of important areas (like New Orleans) that may not necessarily be a high priority terrorist target but are a great risk from natural disasters. So, areas highly vulnerable to terrorist attacks are probably prioritized slightly higher than those simply at risk of a natural disaster. The Commission found that in the area of critical infrastructure risk and vulnerability assessment, no assessments had been conducted, no priorities had been set, and no recommendations have been made to allocate resources in spite of an existing (draft) National Infrastructure Protection Plan that includes standards and guidance for the conduct of vulnerability assessments.²⁷

In Iraq, Joint Service Vulnerability Assessment Teams assessed military operating bases in Iraq to improve security measures.²⁸ Similar to this concept, teams under the jurisdiction of a non-partisan FEMA could conduct and provide current vulnerability assessments. Using the NIPP as their source document, these teams would provide their assessments to DHS for a national ranking of all areas. This has yet to be done and it should take high priority to get completed. Once submitted the assessments should be conducted on a bi-annual basis to validate work performed and to assess status of vulnerability and prioritization.

Much work remains to be done in the area of homeland security and in particular in the area of catastrophic incident response. Questions such as state sovereignty, federal command and control, domestic use of the military, and allocation of federal dollars are complex and emotional subjects. Congress and the interagency continue to work the tough issues with the common goal of protecting our homeland. How it gets done, and how fast effective measures are in place to get it done are questions that this paper addressed. With the reorganization of DHS in progress, echeloned operations centers with multi-functional representation at each level, better definition and codification leading to clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities of responders at all levels of government, and improved resource accountability and allocation processes tied to vulnerability assessments and on levels of risk, based on non-partisan vulnerability assessment teams, significant progress is being made. Improvements are continuously being made in this system. In order to get better accountability of allocation of homeland security funding to localities these funds could be instead granted to regional or state

operations centers and they would in turn award the funds based on regional assessments of risk.

Finally, a very important area is the private sector and the steps it must take in preparation and response to catastrophic incidents. Everyone, from private citizens to corporate America, have a role in how the neighborhoods and the nation prepares for and responds to crisis. Across America this is evident with the organization of citizen first-responder groups and in corporate America with organizations such as ProtectingAmerica. This is a national organization headed by former FEMA Director James Lee Witt and former Deputy Director of the DHS Admiral James Loy. Its purpose is to support regional, state, and local efforts to better prepare and respond to catastrophic events. This organization also is working hard to bring about a National Catastrophe Insurance Program to provide financial protection to citizens as well.²⁹ The nation continues to make progress at all levels every day. However, Congress must not tie the accomplishment of critical measures of homeland security to partisan pork-barrel politics. Every minute we spend wrangling over how to fund and improve our homeland security is time gained by the enemy in preparation for his next attack. The time to act is now; we are moving but must move faster and more effectively.

All of the actions above are critical in moving the nation forward in preparation for the next catastrophic incident. Rapid, effective, and seamless response begins with unity and clarity of command and control. Leaving the states in charge of their own response efforts with support from regional and national agencies provides the most feasible course of action to ensure our communities and our nation is prepared for the next Katrina.

Endnotes

¹ Commissioner Joseph F. Bruno, lecture to AWC Class, New York City, NY, 30 September 2005.

² George W. Bush, *National Strategy for Homeland Security* (Washington D.C.: The White House, July 2002), vii.

³ "National Response Plan" linked from *SourceWatch a project of the Center for Media and Democracy*, available from http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=national_response_plan; Internet; accessed 15 November 2005.

⁴ A "catastrophic incident" is described in the NRP Catastrophic Incident Annex, December 2004, CAT-1, as "any natural or manmade incident, including terrorism, that results in extraordinary levels of mass casualties, damage, or disruption severely affecting the population, infrastructure, environment, economy, national morale, and/or government functions. . . . almost immediately exceeds resources normally available to State, local . . . authorities. These

factors drive the urgency for coordinated natural planning to ensure accelerated Federal/national assistance.”

⁵ George W. Bush, *National Strategy for Homeland Security* (Washington D.C.: The White House, July 2002), 42.

⁶ Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 5-0, Joint Operation Planning*, (Washington D.C.: United States Joint Forces Command, 10 August 2005), III-25.

⁷ Bruno, 30 September 2005.

⁸ Honorable Rick Perry, “*Federalizing Disaster Response*”, 7 November 2005, linked from *The Heritage Foundation Home Page* available from <http://www.heritage.org>; Internet; accessed 19 November 2005.

⁹ MG Richard J. Rowe, Jr, *Statement of Major Richard J. Rowe, Jr, USA, Director of Operations United States Northern Command Before the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats, and Capabilities and the House Homeland Security Committee, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Science and Technology*, 9 November 2005.

¹⁰ Bert B. Tussing and James Kievit, “DOD, NORTHCOM, and the Department of Homeland Security,” *Center for Strategic Leadership Issue Paper* 03-03 (April 2003): 2.

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